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# The FIRST PART of the HISTORY OF THE KING AND COBLER,

SHEWING

w Henry VIII. uſed to viſit the Watches in the City; his Acquaintance with a merry Cobler; how e was entertained in the Cobler's Cellar; and what had like to have befallen him there.

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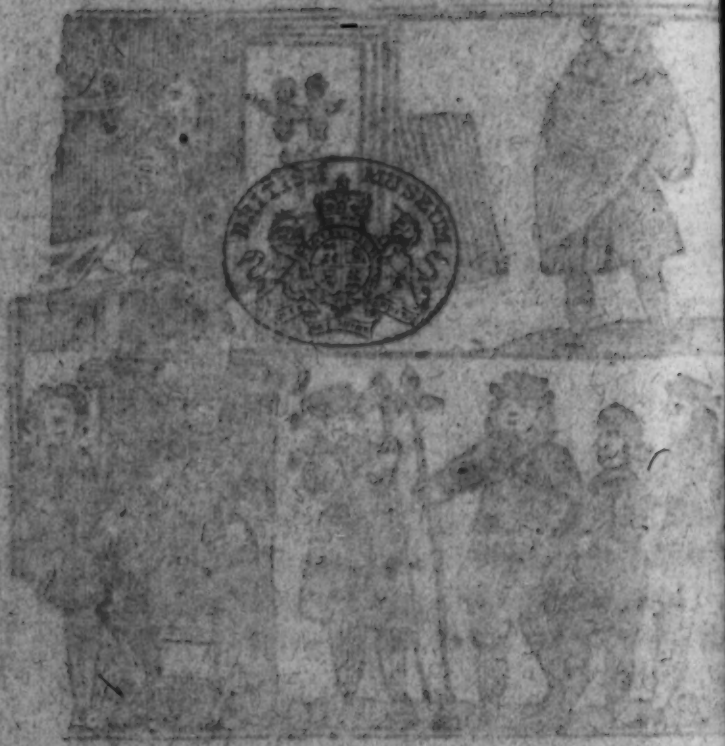

THE

# HISTORY

OF THE

# *KING and COBLER.*

## CHAP. I.

*How King Henry VIII. used to visit the Watches in the City, and how he became acquainted with a merry jovial Cobler.*

IT was the custom of king Henry the eighth to walk late in the night into the city disguised, to observe and take notice how the constables and watch performed their duty, not only in guarding the city gates, but also in diligent watching the inward parts of the city, that so they might in a great measure prevent those disturbances and casualities which too often happen in great and populous cities in the night; and this he did oftentimes without the least discovery

who he was; returning home to Whitehall early in the morning.

Now in his return home through the Strand, he took notice of a certain cobler, who was constantly up at work whistling and singing every morning: the king was resolved to see him, and be acquainted with him, in order to which he immediately knocks the heel off his shoe by hitting it against a stone; and having so done, he bounced at the cobler's stall.

Who's there? cries the cobler,

Here's one, cries the king.

With that the cobler opened the stall door, and the king asked him if he could set the heel on his shoe.

Yes, that I can, ſays the cobler. Come in, honeſt fellow, and ſit thee down by me, and I will do it for thee ſtraight; the cobler ſcraping his awls and old ſhoes to one ſide to make room for the king to ſit down by him.

The king being hardly able to forbear

laughing at the kindneſs of the cobler, aſked him if there was not a houſe hard by that ſold a cup of ale, and the people up.

Yes, ſaid the cobler, there is an inn over the way, where I believe the folks are up, for the carriers go from thence very early in the morning.

With that the king borrowed an old ſhoe of the cobler, and went over to the inn, deſiring the cobler would bring his ſhoe to him thither as ſoon as he had put the heel on again. The cobler promiſed he would; ſo making what haſte he could to put on the heel, he carries it over to the king, ſaying, Honeſt blade, here is thy ſhoe again; and I warrant thee it will not come off again in haſte.

Very well, ſays the king, what muſt you have for your pains.

A couple of pence, replied the cobler.

Well, ſaid the king, being thou art an honeſt merry fellow, here is a teaſter for thee; come ſit down by me, I will drink a full pot with thee. Come, here's a good health to the king.

With all my heart, ſaid the cobler, I'll pledge thee were it in water.

So the cobler ſat down by the king, and was very merry, and drank off his liquor very freely; he likewiſe ſung ſome of his merry ſongs and catches, whereat the king laughed heartily, and was very jocund and pleaſant with the cobler, telling him withal that his name was Harry Tudor, that he belonged to the court, and that if he would come and ſee him there, he would make him

very welcome, becauſe he was a merry companion, and charged him not to forget his name, and to aſk any one for him about the court, and they would ſoon bring him to him; for, ſaid the king, I am very well known there.

Now the cobler little dream't that he was the king that ſpake to him, much leſs that the king's name was Harry Tudor. Therefore, with a great deal of confidence, he ſtands up and puts off his hat, makes two or three ſcrapes with his foot, and gives the king many thanks, alſo telling him that he was one of the moſt honeſt fellows he ever met with in all his life-time, and although he had never been at court, yet he ſhould not be long before he would make a holiday to come and ſee him.

Whereupon the king paying for what they had drunk, would have taken his leave of the cobler; who, not being willing to part with him, took hold of his hand, and ſaid, By my faith you muſt not go, you ſhall firſt go and ſee my poor habitation, I have there a tub of good brown ale that was never tapped yet, and you muſt go and taſte it, for you are the moſt honeſt blade I ever met withal and I love an honeſt merry companion with all my heart.

## CHAP. II.

*How the Cobler entertained the King in his Cellar, and of the Disturbance they had like to have had by his Wife Joan.*

SO the cobler took the king with him over the way where he had his cellar adjoining to the ſtall, which was handſomely and neatly furniſhed for a man of his profeſſion. Into his cellar had the king; there, ſaid he, ſit down, you are welcome, but I muſt deſire you to ſpeak ſoftly for fear of waking my

wife Joan, who lies hard by, (ſhewing the king of a cloſe bed made nearly up at one corner of the cellar, much like a cloſet) for if ſhe ſhould awake ſhe will make our ears ring again.

At which ſpeech of the cobler's the king laughed, and told him, he would be mindful and follow his directions.

Whereupon the cobler kindled up a fire, and fetched out a brown loaf, from which he cut a luſty toaſt, which he ſat baking at the fire; then he brought out his Cheſhire cheeſe. Come, ſaid he, will you eat ſome of my Cheſhire cheeſe; there's as good fellowſhip in eating as there is in drinking.

Which made the king admire the honeſt freedom of the cobler. So having eaten a bit, the cobler began a health,

To all true hearts and merry companions; at which the king ſmiled ſaying, Friend, I'll pledge thee.

In this manner they eat and drank together till it was almoſt break of day; the cobler being very free of his liquor, and delighting the king with ſeveral of his old ſtories, inſomuch that he was highly pleaſed with the manner of his entertainment; when on a ſudden the cobler's wife Joan began to awake. I faith, ſays the cobler, you muſt be gone, my wife Joan begins to grumble, ſhe'll awake preſently, and I would not for half the ſhoes in my ſhop ſhe ſhould find you here.

Then taking the king by the hand, he led him up the ſtairs, ſaying, Farewell, honeſt friend, it ſhan't be long before I make a holiday to come and ſee thee at court.

Thou ſhalt be kindly welcome, replied the king.

So they parted, the king on his way to Whitehall, and the cobler to his cellar, and there putting all thing to rights before his wife Joan got up, he went to work again whiſtling and ſinging as merry as he uſed to do, being much ſatisfied that he happened on ſo good and

jovial a companion, ſtill pleaſing himſelf in his thoughts how merry he ſhould be when he came to court.

## CHAP. III.

*How the Cobler prepared himſelf to go to Court, and how he was ſet out in the beſt Manner by his Wife Joan.*

NOW as ſoon as the king came home he ſent out orders about the court, that if any one enquired for him by the name of Harry Tudor they ſhould immediately bring the perſon before him, whatever he was, without any further examination of him.

The cobler thought every day a month till he had been at court to see his new acquaintance, and was troubled how he should get leave of his wife Joan, for he could not get without her knowledge by reason he did resolve to make himself as fine as he could, for his wife always kept the keys of his holiday clothes, whereupon one evening as they sat at supper, finding her in a very good humour, he began to lay open his mind to her, telling her the whole story of their acquaintance, repeating it over and over again, that he was the most honest fellow that ever he met withal. Husband, quoth she, because you have been so ingenuous to tell me the whole truth I will give you leave to make a holiday for this once; you shall go to court, and I will make you as fine as I can.

So it was agreed that he should go to court the next day; whereupon Joan rose betimes the next morning to brush up her husband's holiday clothes, and made him as fine as she could. She washed and ironed the lace-band, and make his shoes shine that he might see his face in them; having done this she made her husband rise and pull off his shirt. Then she washed him with warm

water from head to foot, putting him on a clean ſhirt; afterwards ſhe dreſſed him in his holiday clothes, pinning his laced band in prim.

## CHAP. IV.

*The Cobler's Reception at Court, with the Manner of his Behaviour before the King.*

THE cobler being thus ſent forth, he ſtrutted through the ſtreets like a crow in a gutter, thinking himſelf as fine as the beſt of them all.

In this manner he came to court, ſtaring on this body and that body as he walked up and down, and not knowing who to aſk for Harry Tudor. At

laſt he eſpied one as he thought in the habit of a ſervant man to whom he made his addreſs, ſaying,

Doſt thou hear, honeſt fellow, do you know one Harry Tudor who belongs to the court.

Yes, ſaid the man, follow me, and I will bring you to him.

With that he had him preſently up into the guard chamber, telling one of the yeomen of the guard there was one that enquired for Harry Tudor.

Replied the yeomen, I know him very well; if you pleaſe to go along with me I'll bring you to him immediately.

So the cobler followed the yoeman, admiring very much the prodigious finery of the rooms which he carried him through. He thought within himſelf that the yeoman was miſtaken in the perſon whom he enquired for; for, ſaid he, he whom I look for, is a plain, merry, honeſt fellow, his name is Harry Tudor; we drank two pots together not long ſince. I ſuppoſe he may belong to ſome lord or other about the court.

I tell you friend, replied the yeoman, I know him very well, do you but follow me and I ſhall bring you to him ſtraight.

So going forward, he came into the room where the king was, accompanied by ſeveral of the nobles who attended him.

As ſoon as the yeoman had put up by the arras, he ſpoke aloud. May it pleaſe your majeſty here is one that enquires for Harry Tudor.

The cobler hearing this, thought he had committed no leſs than treaſon; Therefore he up with his heels and ran for it; but not being acquainted with the ſeveral turnings and rooms through which he came, he was ſoon overtaken; and brought before the king; whom the cobler little thought to be the perſon he enquired after; therefore, in a trembling condition he fell down on his knees, ſaying,

May it pleaſe your grace, may it pleaſe your highneſs, I am a poor cobler, and enquired for one Harry Tudor, who is a very honeſt fellow, I mended the heel of his ſhoe not long ſince, for which he paid me nobly, and gave me two pots to boot, but, I had him afterwards to my cellar, where we drank part of a cup of nappy ale and were very merry, till my wife Joan began to grumble, which put an end to our merriment for that time;

but I told him I would come to the court and see him as soon as conveniently I could.

Well, said the king, don't be troubled, do you know this honest fellow again, if you could see him?

The cobler replied, Yes, that I do among a thousand.

Then, said the king, stand up and be not afraid, but look well about you, peradventure you may find the fellow in this company.

Whereupon the cobler arose, and looked wishfully upon the king and the rest of his nobles, but it was to little or no purpose; for though he saw something in the king's face, which he thought he had seen before, yet he could not imagine him to be Harry Tudor, whose heel of his shoe he had mended and who had been so merry with him at the inn, and at his own cellar.

He therefore told the king he did not expect to find Harry Tudor among such fine folks as he saw there; but that the person he looked for, was a plain honest, and true-hearted fellow. Adding withal, that he was sure that did Harry Tudor but know that he was come to court, he would make him very welcome: for, says the cobler, when we

parted, he charged me to come to court and ſee him, which I promiſed I would, and accordingly I have made an holiday on purpoſe to have a glaſs with him.

At which ſpeech of the cobler's the king had much ado to forbear laughing out, but keeping his countenance as ſteady as he could before the cobler, he ſpoke to the yeoman of the guard.

Here, ſaid he, take this honeſt cobler down into my cellar, and let him drink my good health; I will give orders that Harry Tudor ſhall come to him preſently.

So away they went, the cobler being fit to leap out of his ſkin for joy, not only becauſe he had come off ſo well, but that he ſhould ſee his friend Harry Tudor.

## CHAP. V.

*The Cobler's Entertainment in the King's Cellar: how he met with his new Friend, Harry Tudor, and how he came to know him to be the King.*

THE cobler had not been long in the king's cellar before the king came to him in the ſame habit that he had on when the cobler mended his ſhoe; whereupon the cobler knew him immediately, and ran and kiſſed him, ſaying,

Honeſt Harry, I have made a holiday on purpoſe to ſee you, but I had much ado to get leave of my wife Joan, who was loath that I ſhould loſe ſo much time from my work; but I was reſolved to

ſee you, and therefore I made myſelf as fine as I could. But I'll tell thee Harry, when I came to court I was in a peck of troubles how to find you out; but at laſt I met with a man who told me he knew you very well, and that he would bring me to you, but inſtead of doing ſo, he brought me before the king, which had almoſt frightened me out of my ſeven ſenſes; but in good faith, added the cobler, I am reſolved to be merry with you ſince I have had the good fortune of meeting with you at laſt.

Ah! that you ſhall, replied the king, we will be as merry as princes.

With that he called for a large glaſs of wine, and drank to the cobler the king's good health.

Good-a-mercy, ſaid the cobler, honeſt Harry, I'll pledge that health with all my heart.

Now after the cobler had drunk about four or five good healths he began to be merry, and fell a ſinging his old ſongs and catches, which pleaſed the king very much and made him laugh heartily.

When on a ſudden, ſeveral of the nobles came into the cellar, extraordinarily rich in apparel, who all ſtood uncovered before Harry Tudor, which

put the cobler into great amazement at firſt; but preſently recovered himſelf, he looked more wiſhfully upon Harry Tudor, which ſoon knowing him to be the king whom he ſaw in the preſence chamber, though in another habit, he immediately fell upon his knees, ſaying,

May it pleaſe your grace, may it pleaſe your highneſs, I am a poor honeſt cobler and mean no harm.

No, no, ſaid the king, nor ſhall receive any here, I aſſure you.

He commanded him therefore to riſe up and be as merry as he was before; and though he knew him to be the king, yet he ſhould uſe the ſame freedom with him as he did before when he mended the heel of his ſhoe.

This kind ſpeech of the king's, and three or four glaſſes of wine, made the cobler to be in as good a humour as he was before, telling the king ſeveral of his pretty ſtories and ſinging ſome of his beſt ſongs, very much to the ſatisfaction of the king and all his nobles.

THE COBLER'S

# SONG,

IN THE

# *KING's CELLAR.*

*To the Tune of*—Jenny Gin, &c.

COME let us drink the other pot,
Our sorrows to confound;
We'll laugh and sing before the king,
So let his health go round:
For I am as bold as bold can be,
No cobler ever was ruder;
Then here, good fellows, here's to thee,
Rememb'ring Harry Tudor.

When I'm at work, within my ſtall,
Upon him I ſhall think;
His kindneſs I to mind will call,
Whene'er I eat or drink:
His kindneſs was to me ſo great,
The like was never known;
His kindneſs I ſhall ſtill repeat,
And ſo ſhall my wife Joan.

I'll laugh when I ſit in my ſtall,
And merrily will ſing,
That I with my poor laſt and awl,
Am fellow with the king:
But it is more, I muſt confeſs,
Than I at firſt did know;
But Harry Tudor ne'ertheleſs,
Reſolves it ſhall be ſo.

And now farewel unto Whitehall,
I homeward muſt retire,
To ſing and whiſtle in my ſtall,
My Joan will me deſire.
I do but think how ſhe will laugh,
When ſhe hears of this thing,
That he that drank her nut brown ale,
Was England's royal king.

## CHAP. VI.

*How the Cobler became a Courtier.*

NOW the king conſidering the pleaſant humour of the cobler, how innocently merry he was, and free from any deſigns; that he was a perſon which laboured very hard, and took a great deal of pains for a ſmall livelihood, was pleaſed out of his princely grace and favour, to allow him a liberal annuity of forty marks a year, for the better ſupport of his jolly humour, and the maintenance of his wife Joan; and that he ſhould be admitted one of his courtiers, and that he might have the freedom of his cellar, whenever he pleaſed.

Which being ſo much beyond ex
pectation, did highly exalt the cobler'
humour much to the ſatisfaction of th
king.

So after a great many legs and ſcra
pes, he returned home to his wife Joa
with the joyful news of his reception
the court; which ſo well pleaſed he
that ſhe did not think much at the gre
pains ſhe took in decking him up fo
the journey.

*Note*, In the ſecond part you have
further account of the cobler's re
turn to his wife Joan; and of the
comical diſcourſe that paſſed be
tween them; alſo how the cobler
returned to court, the queen go
notice of the diverſion he gave th
king and courtiers, was reſolved t
be a partaker of his merriment
and how he was kept the remain
der of his days about the court
with many other things worthy o
attention.

*FINIS.*